

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 00163 081818Z

63

ACTION EUR-25

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R 081740Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7750

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USEC BRUSSELS 766

USCINCEUR BAIHINGEN

US MISSION NATO 406

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 163

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SP, GI, XG

SUBJ: MFA OFFICIAL COMMENTS ON NEW FOREIGN MINISTER

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF JAN 8, MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR NORTH AMERICAN AND FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS VOICED HIS DELIGHT WITH APPOINTMENT OF CORTINA MAURI, AN OLD FRIEND, AS NEW FOREIGN MINISTER IN PLACE OF LOPEZ-RODO. HE MADE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT NEW FOREIGN MINISTER:

2. CORTINA IS MORE METHODICAL THAN WAS LOPEZ-RODO AND LESS RIGID IN APPROACH. ALTHOUGH CORTINA, WITH EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE IN INTERNATIONAL LAW, TENDS TO TAKE JURIDICAL APPROACH TO FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS, HE IS NONETHELESS PRACTICAL.

3. MAIN LINES OF SPANISH FOREIGN POLICY WILL BE UNCHANGED BY SHIFT IN FOREIGN MINISTERS. CORTINA EXPECTED TO MAIN-
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PAGE 02 MADRID 00163 081818Z

TAIN COMMITMENT TO PURSUIT OF CLOSER INTEGRATION OF SPAIN
IN EUROPE, RECOVERY OF GIBRALTAR AND CLOSE FRIENDSHIP WITH

US, THOUGH THERE MAY BE DIFFERENCES OF NUANCE IN HIS METHODS.

4. AS UNDER SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS 1958-1966 (UNDER THEN FOREIGN MINISTER CASTIELLA), CORTINA ACQUIRED SOME FAMILIARITY WITH US AFFAIRS AND US-SPANISH MILITARY COOPERATION, THOUGH HE NEVER TOOK PART IN ACTUAL BASE NEGOTIATIONS. CORTINA HAS HAD VIRTUALLY NO EXPOSURE TO US AFFAIRS SINCE THAT TIME.

5. WHILE CORTINA HAS NOT BEEN CLOSE PERSONAL FRIEND OF PRESIDENT ARIAS NAVARRO IN PAST, ARIAS CAME TO KNOW AND RESPECT HIM DURING PERIOD THAT ARIAS WAS MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND CORTINA AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE WHEN TWO MEN WORKED TOGETHER FREQUENTLY ON SECURITY MATTERS CONCERNING SPANISH REFUGEES IN FRANCE.

6. BESIDES BRIEF VISIT TO PARIS IN NEAR FUTURE TO MAKE FAREWELL CALLS (REPORTED SEPTTEL), CORTINA'S FIRST OFFICIAL OVERSEAS VISIT EXPECTED TO BE TO PHILLIPPINES FEB 18 AND 19 TO ACCOMPANY PRINCE JUAN CARLOS. RIVERO

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